

BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Burlington Community Members,

The following is information about the release of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Visiting Team Report to Burlington High School. Sharing of this report is a step in an accreditation process.

NEASC accredits schools in the six-state region who elect to affiliate. The accreditation involves a threefold process and occurs every ten years for schools choosing to be members. The first step is a self study (conducted by high school staff), the second is a team visit to the school (conducted by members appointed by NEASC) and the third is follow up (performed by the school based on recommendations of the Commission on Public Secondary Schools of NEASC).

Step one began in September of 2015 when Burlington High School began the self-study portion of the process. A survey of staff, students and parents was conducted as part of the self study in the spring of 2016. The completed self study was submitted to NEASC in the fall of 2016.

The second step of the process, took place in November of 2016. A visiting team of sixteen members spent four days at BHS interviewing staff and parents, shadowing students and reviewing curriculum, teaching, assessment, policies, procedures, staffing and the facility. This team has prepared a report to be shared with the high school principal, superintendent of schools, board of education, state department of education, public library or city town office and the appropriate news media.

The report summarizes a review of the school on teaching and learning standards. These standards include core values, beliefs, learning expectations, curriculum, instruction and assessment of student learning. Additionally, the NEASC visiting team reviewed how teaching and learning standards are supported at BHS. These supports include school culture and leadership, school resources for learning and community resources for learning.

The role of the visiting committee is to develop commendations and recommendations on the standards and their supports. In the report are highlights of what we do well and suggestions for improvement in all standards. For example, they recognize that the BHS Graduate Expectations (GXs) development process enhanced school unity, identity, sense of purpose and pride and achievement (commendation). They also recognize that we need to be intentional in how the GXs guide school policies, procedures and allocation of resources (recommendation).

Our **commendations** are MANY and are to be celebrated. They include recognition that BHS:

- is in transition to new models of organizing our curriculum and assessment to reflect proficiency based learning and grading.
- has established professional learning communities with purpose.
- celebrates a high degree of inclusion and diversity.
- has a proactive advisory program.
- provides a safe, positive and respectful learning environment.
- is home to a vibrant and welcoming library open and supervised before, during and after school.
- has a robust health services program with a range of coordinated services.

The **recommendations** of the NEASC visiting committee are important for us to consider. Continuous improvement is always a goal at our school. A few of the important recommendations include:

- coordination and articulation of curriculum between academic departments.
- scaffolding of curriculum k-12 so that our courses build upon each other district-wide.
- increasing library/media specialist staffing to integrate curriculum and provide instruction on information skills.
- dedicating faculty time in our Professional Learning Community meetings to reflect and to make regular use of data.
- focusing intentionally on support for identified students (Special Education, Section 504 of the ADA and English Language Learning).
- completing ADA compliance upgrades to the facility to insure greater accessibility.

The visiting committee report is comprehensive and outlines the commendations and recommendations above and many others in greater detail. It is clear that the visiting committee recognizes the need for building administration to work with intention and purpose with the district and the faculty to provide leadership based on the school's core values, beliefs and learning expectations. This work is underway and will continue to move us in a positive direction.

The third and final step in the accreditation process will be the follow up. This follow up will include designing steps and strategies to address the recommendations made in the NEASC report that will be shared with the administration and staff. A key to shaping a successful learning environment is teachers and administrators collaborating and reflecting as we partner with parents in education. We look forward to work ahead!

The comprehensive report is available here:

[NEASC Visiting Team Report BHS](#)

Most sincerely,



Tracy Racicot
Interim Principal